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NISEI
in the
WAR *against* JAPAN

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR
War Relocation Authority
Washington, D. C.
April, 1945.

C-2240-Cover

Nisei aid in Saipan -in the Camotes

JAP-AMERICAN PROVES PATRIOT

Clears Saipan Cave Of Foe By Courageous Talk To Refugees

By KEITH WHEELER

WITH THE U. S. THIRD FLEET IN THE PACIFIC, Jan. 29.—(By Wireless) — (NANA) Remember back in September or October, when a super-patriotic barber out in Denver or some other place began slugging a wounded and decorated Japanese-American soldier, who wanted only a haircut?

It made me sore at the time and now that I think about it, I'm downright mad.

If memory serves, the barber said he had two sons fighting the Japs. and to his mind any Jap is a Jap and he aimed to give the boys a hand. I'm reminded of one "any" Jap named Kubo, a sergeant in the Army of the United States, who served as interpreter on Saipan.

Kubo Proves Patriotism

There came a time in those cruel, heart-breaking and incredible days, while the Americans were trying to round up Jap civilians, when Kubo proved his Americanism.

Huddled in a cave on the precipitous face of a cliff were about 40 wounded, ragged, starving men, women and children. For five days they remained stubbornly, mutely immobile while Americans pleaded, cajoled, threatened and bribed them to come out and accept salvation. Nothing worked.

They simply sat, and tired Americans wasted priceless time from the major job of killing savage snipers who daily claimed a toll of American lives.

At last Sergeant Kubo shucked off his weapons and equipment, scrambled down the face of the cliff and, unarmed, walked into the cave.

Faces Jap Rilleman

He didn't try to high-pressure the terrified refugees. He talked calmly, reasonably, with sympathy.

"You're tired, hungry, wounded. You need help. If you will listen, I can give you that and justice," he said. "I don't expect you to believe me, but here I give you the names of your neighbors who already have decided to surrender and now are receiving the things you need."

A movement behind him brought Kubo's head around and there stood a Jap soldier with a rifle leveled at his back. He stayed calm—a virtue the barber could use.

"We Americans admire you. You fought well. But you have lost. There is nothing further you can do for your country now. If I were you, I would choose to live," he told the soldier.

Calmness Wins

"I'm leaving now," he informed them all, "but I can give you a little time to think it over. Then because we must have it, an American battalion will take this cave and you cannot stop us. If you decide to surrender, let me know."

He walked out, not even batting an eye as he passed the soldier with the rifle.

An hour later, two frightened old gaffers crawled up the cliff and said they wanted some of that justice Kubo had talked about. Next morning the whole lot, including the soldier, surrendered.

That Kubo possessed mercy, intelligence and courage, all of which the Denver barber might cultivate with profit.

Arizona STAR

Jap-American soldiers honored

Participation of Japanese American troops in the conquest of Saipan island was disclosed yesterday in a report announcing citations for six American soldiers of Japanese ancestry.

Four of the soldiers, all of whom received Bronze Stars, are from California. They are:

T/Sgt. Ben Henda, Marysville; T/Sgt. George Matsui, Los Angeles; T/Sgt. Min Nakanishi, Stockton, and T/Sgt. Mike Sakamoto, San Jose.

Los Angeles NEWS
August, 1944

NISEI SOLDIER HELPS COMRADES FOIL JAPANESE

The Indian style moonlit attack by a Japanese force might have been disastrous for the men at the command post in the Camotes islands had it not been for a Japanese-American, a Neisi, who listening for the commands barked out by the Jap commander, translated them to the Americans, according to Maj. Cortez A. Kitchen, who is now recovering at Madigan general hospital from the wounds received in the encounter.

Major Kitchen was executive officer of the reinforced battalion of the 7th infantry division that was sent into the Camotes islands to answer the appeal of the islanders for relief from the Jap troops. One night the Japs slipped out of the pocket in the forest where the five fighting companies of the battalion had penned them and attacked the command post.

The action that followed was like an Indian encounter in American frontier days. The Yanks were stationed behind trees in a square about 100 yards each way around the post. The Japs massed for the attack in the surrounding woods. Just inside the defense perimeter was the Neisi, listening to the Japanese commander instructing his men.

Three times the Japs tried to crash through the square around the command post, hitting first on one side and then the other. Each new attack on a new section of the square was preceded by a barked command in Japanese, and each time the Neisi warned where to prepare for action.

The attacks continued four hours. At dawn the Japs fled, leaving 30 dead. There were eight casualties among the defenders, one of whom was the major, who was hit when he exposed himself while attempting to send a radio message to the headquarters' task force at Leyte.

Tacoma NEWS-TIMES
March, 1945

C-2240-p1-of-15-bu-ces-wp

On Iwo Jima, Guam, and in the Marianas

JAP-AMERICAN BRAVERY HAILED BY CAMERA MAN

A1767

Loyalty Proved in Battle, He Says

BY CHARLES GOTTHART

[Chicago Tribune Press Service]

New York, March 31—Americans of Japanese ancestry who are serving with the Pacific assault forces have proved their loyalty to the United States thru heroism that has won the praises of all who have seen them in action.

This was the message brought back from the Pacific today by Joe Rosenthal, Associated Press photographer who made the historic picture of the marines raising the Stars and Stripes at the crater rim of Mount Suribachi after the bloody battle for Iwo Island.

"There are thousands of Japanese-Americans in United States service in all theaters," Rosenthal said in an interview. "All of those with whom I came into contact are anxious to prove their loyalty to this country. Often their anxiety is touching, for they volunteer for all sorts of dangerous missions.

Many Pay With Lives.

"Many have paid with their lives, and many more have been wounded. They have done an outstanding job for the allied cause and their heroism should be recognized. It has been recognized by the marine commanders where I saw them in action at Guam, Peleliu, and Iwo.

"Usually they work with headquarters in serving as interpreters. Armed with hand grenades at the entrances to Jap pillboxes or caves, they often convince the enemy to surrender where American officers, lacking the proper diction of the Jap language, would fail.

"They work so close to the enemy on these missions that, along with the danger of being killed by Japs, they run the risk of being shot, unintentially, by our own marines. From a distance it's hard to tell them from the enemy. Their dungarees soon become ragged in rough country and the similarity of their physical appearance makes their job that much tougher."

Shifts to Pacific Asked.

Rosenthal said many of the Jap-Americans in service in Europe had clamored for transfer to the Pacific where, lent to the marines, their linguistic and other talents could be put to better use. He said virtually all were serving with special units rather than with regular fighting units.

"And they get along fine with the marines, who are pushing their way to Tokyo," he added.

Rosenthal condemned isolated instances of antagonism toward Jap-American fighting men by United States groups. He termed a "crying shame" the action by the Hood River, Wash., American Legion post in removing the names of Japanese-Americans from the city's honor roll, a move that also was condemned by the national Legion organization. The names later were restored.

Rosenthal is preparing to return to the Pacific soon.

Chicago Tribune

April, 1945

Family of Nisei in Marines On Iwo Lives in Chicago

By Roy Cummings.

Chicago Sun Foreign Service.

WITH THE MARINES ON IWO, Feb. 28.

SGT. JAMES YOSHINOBU, whose wife and five children live in Chicago, is one of the first Japanese-Americans (Nisei) to work with the Marines in the Pacific war.

Previously they have traveled with the Army as interpreters in such campaigns as the Marshalls and Marianas.

Two groups of Nisei landed with the Marines on Iwo Island —one each with the 4th and 5th Divisions. Yoshinobu was in one of the units.

* * *

YOSHINOBU, 47, is a veteran of World War I. Born in Maui island of the Hawaiian islands, he volunteered for the Army in 1916 and was trained at Camp Grant but he did not go overseas.

After the war, he went to Northwestern University and received a degree in electrical engineering. He operated a truck farm near Los Angeles from 1920 until he enlisted in the Army in 1943.

He said he thought he would not return to California after the war.

* * *

"I HAVE very little reason to," he said wryly. "A friend wrote me that the house I built on the land I had leased for farming had been stripped of everything but the walls. I plan to go to Wisconsin or Michigan after the war and perhaps return to electrical engineering which I was never able to do in California.

"I like Chicago all right but would rather live in a smaller town. My kids are used to the country and like it."

Mrs. Yoshinobu lives at 3949 Lake Park av., with their two sons, Rei, 12, and Seiji, 8, and their three daughters, Tomika Julie, 14, Sumie Jean, 5, and Etsuko Agnes, 2.

SGT. JAMES YOSHINOBU'S wife, Toshi, and their five children came to Chicago last December from a relocation center in Rohwer, Ark.

Sgt. James Yoshinobu.

The oldest child, Tomika Julie, is a freshman at Hyde Park High School, and the next three attend Oakenwald Grammar School. Mrs. Yoshinobu knew her husband was in the Pacific area, but had not known he was on Iwo until told by The Sun.

C-2240-p2-bu

Now in the Marianas

Nisei Gunner 'Takes Care'

T. Sgt. Ben Kuroki, the Hershey, Neb., Japanese-American turret gunner who requested Pacific service after 30 bombing missions in Europe, has found certain disadvantages at his new post.

In a letter from "Somewhere in the Marianas" he writes: "There are still a few of my dishonorable ancestors running loose on this island. They don't give us much trouble, but at one time our boys fell victims to a lot of wild rumors and became a bit trigger happy . . . I had to be careful not to go walking in my sleep, or some yardbird would take a couple of shots at me."

Sergeant Kuroki returned last year from the European theater with two Distinguished Flying Crosses. In November he became a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars here. His letter was to C. F. Mulvihill, tenth district VFW Judge Advocate.

"I'm sure that if more people could see the actual tragedies on the battlefronts they would be resolved to make this the last war," he wrote.

"I must concentrate on dropping some 'roses' on Tokyo Rose. If things go well, I'll see you in Omaha again."

Omaha WORLD-HERALD
February, 1945

WRA

Home Is Where the Heart Is

"I have the face of a Japanese but my heart is American," said T. Sgt. Ben Kuroki in revealing here that the War Department has granted his request for assignment to combat duty in the Pacific.

Speaking before a group of transplanted Nisei (Japanese-Americans shunted from the West Coast) this modest soldier from Hershey, Neb., who flew with the first Liberator squadron over Europe, told of his ambition to fly over Tokyo in a bomber.

His words might well be pondered by some, perhaps well-intentioned, who have the face of Americans but the hearts of bigots so far as Ben Kuroki and his minority group of Americans are concerned.

Omaha WORLD-HERALD
November, 1944

-83-bu

On Leyte, Luzon, and Aitape

Hachiya Gave His Life For Our Country

Was On Dangerous Voluntary Mission

News of the death of Frank Hachiya, who was born on the Rodamer ranch at Odell and attended Odell schools before he went to the University of Oregon, came in a special Associated Press dispatch from Leif Erickson, at U.S. Army Pacific Headquarters, and follows:

"Frank T. Hachiya, 25, one of 16 Japanese-Americans whose names have been stricken from the county memorial roll by the Hood River, Or., American Legion post, died while performing a dangerous volunteer mission, the army reported Thursday of last week.

"Hachiya, attached to the 7th division, was fatally wounded on Leyte, December 30. He died January 3, after most of the men in his regiments volunteered to give him blood transfusions.

Lieut. Howard Moss ,Hachiya's commanding officer, said Frank volunteered to cross a valley under Japanese fire to scout an enemy position. The regiment was in a tough spot. Information on enemy disposition was essential. At the bottom of the valley Frank worked ahead of his protecting patrol.

"A Jap sniper let Frank have it at close range," Moss related. "Frank emptied his gun into the sniper. Shot through the abdomen, Frank walked back up the hill. Medics gave him plasma and then started him to a hospital. He was operated on immediately, but the bullet had gone through his liver and he died."

Hachiya enlisted shortly after the Pearl harbor attack, and had served through the Kwajalien and Eniwetok invasions. He was attached to General MacArthur's staff as an interpreter.

NEWS, Hood River Ore.
February, 1945

CAVES HIDE ENEMY IN LUZON HILL WAR

Americans Lug All Equipment Up Steep Zambales Ridges—Japanese Use Shotguns

3/19/45

By LINDESAY PARROTT
By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WITH THE THIRTY-EIGHTH DIVISION, on Luzon, March 18—One of the stubbornest small engagements in the Luzon campaign is still being fought fifty miles north of Manila, where a force of Japanese who fled from Fort Stotsenburg holed up in the hills as troops of Lieut. Gen. Walter Krueger's Sixth Army brushed by them to take the Philippines capital and for more than a month have been stubbornly resisting all efforts to dislodge them.

• • •

Radio Broadcast Under Way

Just as we arrived they had set up radio equipment, all of which also had been carried in, and an American-born Nisei boy was making a broadcast to enemy troops summoning them to surrender. No effect was observable but the soldiers say they sometimes have known Japanese to commit suicide as a result of learning from such broadcasts that they were surrounded and unable to escape.

U. S.-BURN JAPANESE AID YANKS IN PACIFIC

Nisei Valuable as Interpreters and Translators, St. Louisan Says.

Nisei, or American-born Japanese, are performing invaluable service in the front lines of Southwest Pacific battle areas as interpreters and as translators of captured documents, Staff Sgt. George B. Coleman said today after returning from two and a half years of service in that area.

• • •

"At Aitape I was helping question Japanese who were captured," he said. "The Nisei acted as interpreters. We'd be lost without them. They are so few they work nearly all the time, and we could use more of them.

During the Buna campaign, Coleman was one of an infantry reconnaissance unit that worked immediately in front of or behind enemy lines. During the six weeks his company was in action, its strength dropped from 144 to 68 because of deaths, wounds or illness.

St. Louis POST-DISPATCH
September, 1944

TWO OREGONIANS BACK JAP-YANKS

Portland, Ore., Dec. 16—(U.P.) Two prominent Oregon men today defended the 16 Japanese-American soldiers whose names were removed from the Memorial plaque at Hood River, Ore., American Legion post.

Dr. Harold J. Noble, a marine major formerly with the history department of the University of Oregon, said he commanded a unit of Japanese-American soldiers in the Pacific area, and that his men consistently showed great courage.

G. B. McLean, editor of the service bulletin of the Oregon State Medical society, told of Capt. Robert Kinoshita, army medical corps, who was wounded three times and is again on active duty in Holland.

C-2240-p4-bu

A Soldier Writes from Burma

Nisei Writes Japan's Epitaph

'Her History Ended On Dec. 7, 1941'

By Eugene Rachlis.
Chicago Sun Washington Bureau.

Washington, Sept. 23.—A young Nisei (Japanese-American) fighting with Merrill's Marauders in Burma against his former countrymen has learned the value of the democratic way of life as opposed to that laid down by Japanese warlords.

In a letter to his 12-year-old sister, now in a War Relocation Administration relocation area, the fighting sergeant urged the girl "to enter a real American school and live the American way."

Letter Tells of Disgust.

In the letter, made available to The Chicago Sun, he poured out his disgust with his former country in these words:

"Japan is a country of the past—her history ended on Dec. 7, 1941."

Sgt. G. — his actual name must be withheld because his parents have close blood relatives in Japan who could be subjected to reprisals by the government—is one of many Japanese-Americans now fighting the Japs in Asia. From field reports he has done more than his share. An excerpt from his letter to his sister shows that.

Fought Four Months in Burma.

"Right now I'm in an American hospital recovering and recuperating from my third attack of malaria, double hernia and intestinal ulcer," he wrote. "We were in Burma for four months fighting the Japs in the jungles and mountainsides. I had walked 860 miles, climbed hills that you practically had to crawl up, crossed and recrossed rivers 49 times. It rains quite a bit in Burma, and at times I slept wet, wet all day for weeks at a time."

Because of his knowledge of the language, Sgt. G. was used by military intelligence in questioning prisoners. His findings give a picture of Japanese life at home and in the field that can be accepted as valid.

Many Prisoners Questioned.

His letter said:

"I questioned many Japanese prisoners and found that the Japanese Army is rapidly deteriorating from lack of supplies and ammunition. The Americans have cut the Japanese supply lines in many places so that they have a hard time to do anything. One prisoner who recently left Japan told me that things are bad, food, clothing, recreation and all sorts of conditions are very bad, that the crime wave in Japan is terrible due to shortages.

"He told me that returning Japanese to Japan from America had most of their household equipment, such as irons, waffle irons, heaters, radios, ice refridgidaires (sic), bed springs and mattresses, confiscated as need for war production. Also that the returning Japanese were treated with contempt because they didn't do their part in the attempt to crush America.

Suspicious of One Another.

"The prisoner knew all these things because his brother had returned to Japan on the exchange ship and told of many shameful incidents that they went through. Now you know how suspicious the Japanese are of one another in Japan—well, the prisoner states that it is worse now due to the Fifth Column activities in Japan. It is such that if one family gets into a fight with another they report to the Japanese kenpei that such and such a family is doing many queer things and as a result they are sent to jail and undergo many cruel treatments.

"Such is the inside of Japan today."

He Sums It Up.

With this picture before him, Sgt. G. reached a conclusion he must have more than suspected he would reach when he volunteered for service. This is what he told his sister:

"These statements made by this prisoner set me to thinking very seriously about your mother and dad. For your sake I would want you to enter a real American school and live the American way The life you are leading now is not the thing for you. You must live in America—'cuz you are all America by heart. Dad and mother must realize this and they do know it deep down in their hearts.

"Yes, Japan is a country of the past—her history ended on Dec. 7, 1941."

Chicago Sun

Awards Go to Pacific Heroes

The Bronze Star has been given Lieut. Shigao Yasutake, formerly of Gardena, Calif., who has served two years in the Solomons, on Russalia Island, in the Munda campaign on New Georgia, and on Guadalcanal, New Caledonia, and Vella Lavella in the Bougainville sector. He has three brothers in the Army, privates.

Other California Japanese-Americans given the same citation include Technical Sergeants Bon Honda, Marysville; George Matsui, Los Angeles; Mike Sakamoto, San Jose; Min Nakanishi, Stockton —for meritorious action in the capture of Saipan. The same award went to Howard Hiroki of Honolulu, Hawaii. One young Japanese-American, Technical Sergeant Terry Mizutari, killed while commanding a group of men during a Japanese counterattack, has been posthumously awarded the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and a citation from his commanding general.

Christian Science Monitor
March, 1945

DeWitt Hospital Treats Japanese American Soldiers

AUBURN (Placer Co.), Dec. 7.—Approximately 20 Japanese-Hawaiian soldiers, veterans of nearly every theater of operations, are being treated at the DeWitt Army General Hospital near Auburn.

This was disclosed today by Colonel William H. Smith, commandant of the hospital, who said the patients represent practically all the branches of the service, including paratroopers and infantrymen.

Many suffered their battle wounds for which they are being treated on the Italian front. Colonel Smith singled out as an example Sergeant Imoto of Honolulu, a veteran of the Italian front, southwest Pacific invasions and Saipan. Imoto, who holds 13 different ribbons, was machine gunned in the shoulder in Italy.

The patients were sent to the DeWitt General Hospital because of army policy placing wounded soldiers in hospitals nearest their homes, in this case Honolulu and other Hawaiian island areas.

The present population of the hospital, which specializes in vascular and neuro surgery, is 1,100 patients, with a maximum capacity of 1,700.

Sacramento Bee.

3 'Ears' of Merrill's Marauders Return to Fort Snelling as China-Burma Vets

AMERICAN - JAPANESE VETERANS from the China-India-Burma theater who were members of Merrill's Marauders, show Col. K. E. Rasmussen, commandant of the military intelligence language school at Fort Snelling, the area of their operations. The three formerly studied under Rasmussen and are on their way to attend officer candidate school at Fort Benning, Ga. They are, left to right, Sgt. Robert Y. Honda, Sgt. Russell K. Kono and Sgt. Y. Herbert Miyasaki.

American-Japanese to Be Officers

Three graduates of the army language school formerly conducted at Camp Savage, returned to Fort Snelling Wednesday after serving as "ears" for the famous "Merrill's Marauders" in the China-Burma-India war theater.

They have worked within 40 yards of Japanese lines while Gen. Merrill's troops were advancing against the enemy.

All Americans of Japanese descent, the men are T/Sgt. Robert Y. Honda, S/Sgt. Russell K. Kono and T/Sgt. Y. Herbert Miyasaki. They now are en route to Fort Benning, Ga., for officer training.

WEARS BRONZE STAR

Kono wears a bronze star, presidential citation and combat infantryman badge. He won it for holding a road block with four other men while three wounded comrades were withdrawn to a safe position.

Honda wears a presidential citation. His battalion once was surrounded by the Japanese for 13 days. The men had no drinking water for three days. During one 24-hour period, the battalion fought off six counter-attacks.

Miyasaki, who has the presidential citation and combat infantry badge, was personal interpreter for Gen. Merrill through the North Burma campaign.

COMMANDER DIED

Capt. William A. Laffin, commanding officer of the men when they left Savage, died in Burma. Now in charge is Lt. Edward H. Mitsukado, promoted from sergeant to lieutenant in the field.

The sergeants, who took three months of "jungle training" in India while attached to Merrill's Marauders, praised the specialized training received at Camp Savage under Col. K. E. Rasmussen.

TRIBUNE
Minneapolis, Minn.
January, 1945

Editors Comment on Nisei

Frank Hachiya, American

From now on Frank Hachiya won't have to give a damn about what the American Legion post of Hood River, Oregon, thinks, says, or does about him. On Leyte, the Japanese-American volunteered to cross a valley under enemy fire to scout their position. As he was doing so, a Japanese bullet stopped the American.

Out in Hood River, Oregon, some of the old-timers who fought for America a quarter of a century ago never did learn, apparently, what they were fighting for. Over the strenuous protests of national Legion officials, they voted to strike the names of 16 Japanese-Americans from the county memorial roll. It didn't make any difference to them what General Eisenhower or General MacArthur or General Mark Clark might think of such fellows fighting under their command. Under their definition of Americanism, any man with Japanese blood in his veins was out.

What is an American? We are no race, no color, no creed. The melting pot of all the world was welded together out of a common faith in the equality of man, as best expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution with its Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address, and, for that matter, the Sermon on the Mount. When any man risks his life for this country on an especially hazardous mission, it is only fair and reasonable to assume that as an American he knew what he was fighting, what he was dying for.

Pittsburgh POST-GAZETTE
February, 1945

LITTLE KENNY YASUI

For those skeptics who question the sincerity of Japanese-American soldiers, here's a little story.

Staff Sgt. Kenny Yasui of Los Angeles, Calif., has distinguished himself as the "Baby Sergeant York" for his heroism on the Burma front. Although he is only five feet two and weighs scarcely more than 120 pounds, he's plenty tough when it comes to fighting Japs for Uncle Sam.

During mopping up operations after the collapse of organized resistance on the Irrawaddy river, a group of about 17 enemy Japs was hiding out on an island. There was a call for volunteers and little Kenny was among the first to step out. He and three others stripped and swam the river, with Kenny in charge.

Upon approaching the enemy nest, California-born Kenny Yasui yelled into the brush in the Japanese he learned while a student at Waseda university, Tokyo. He ordered the enemy to come out and surrender.

In their bewilderment, the nips filed out to surrender their arms. Just then, a Jap officer sprang from a thicket, throwing a hand grenade to blow up Yasui and himself. Yasui jumped into a foxhole and the Jap officer into another world. Then Kenny drew his sword. Three recalcitrant Japs were killed by other Americans while Yasui held his ground.

Little Kenny solved the problem of getting the party across the Irrawaddy by having the remaining 13 prisoners swim pushing a raft. On the raft sat Kenny, sword in hand, bringing his prisoners back in the name of Old Glory.

It's a great tribute to those many Japanese-Americans who are striving conscientiously to be good citizens of the country of their birth.

Twin Falls TIMES NEWS
October, 1944

Soldiers in the Pacific War

Nisei Heroes

Newspapers which have reached us from the Territory of Hawaii abound in accounts of heroic services performed by American soldiers of Japanese descent on duty in the Pacific. We have heard something of the gallantry of these Nisei in Italy. For example, the 1300 men who comprise the 100th Infantry Battalion—all of them of Japanese ancestry—have earned 1000 Purple Hearts, 11 Distinguished Service Crosses, 44 Silver Stars, 31 Bronze Stars and three Legion of Merit decorations. But there has been virtually complete silence from the War Department concerning the valor of the Nisei in the Far East. We believe their story should be told—not merely in Hawaii, whence many of them entered the Army, but here in the continental United States, where some Americans have still to learn that devotion to democracy is not an inherited characteristic.

Nisei soldiers have played a vital and dramatic role in our succession of victories over the Japanese in the coral islands and steaming jungles of the Pacific theater of operations. Their knowledge of the Japanese language has been invaluable. And this has been principally because they were so often willing to incur terrible risks to make it effective. One of them allowed himself to be lowered by a rope into one of those huge caves on Saipan which the Japanese had utilized as centers of resistance; then by a combination of wit and bluff and bravery he contrived to obtain the release of all the civilians whom the Japs had herded there. In Burma, according to men who have been their comrades there, the Nisei proved themselves particularly intrepid and helpful, venturing into the enemy lines and throwing them into confusion by speaking their language. They have done no such deeds for the Navy or Marine Corps, to be sure; these branches of the service have never seen fit to permit their enlistment.

The War Department's expressed reason for its silence about such exploits is that the men's families, if still in Japan, might suffer reprisals from the Japanese. It seems to us a curious explanation. In many cases, the families of these men are not in the hands of the enemy at all but in the hands of an agency of the United States Government. They are "detained" in "relocation centers" because the War Department lacks sufficient faith in American democracy to permit them to return to their homes. And in other cases, the caution strikes us as excessive; it is not applied to men whose families may be subject to Nazi reprisals in Lithuania or Czechoslovakia or Norway. The Nisei have made a magnificent record in this war. Their fellow Americans ought to hear about it—if only to assure their families better treatment here at home.

Washington D.C. POST
September, 1944

Bronze Star Is Awarded Relative Of Poston Man

With the 81st "Wildcat" Infantry Division in the Pacific—Staff Sergeant Shinso Chojin, cousin of George Takata, 17-13-D, Poston, Arizona, has been awarded a Bronze Star for heroic achievement with the 81st "Wildcat" Infantry division commanded by Maj. Gen. Paul J. Mueller. The award was in connection with Sgt. Chojin's going to the aid of a wounded man on Angaur island in a dense jungle area.

SUN and SENTINEL Yuma, Ariz.
April, 1945

Nisei Sergeant Interviewed in Manila

By GENE SHERMAN

MANILA.—While I was waiting for some transportation at the 1st Cavalry Division headquarters in a suburb of the city, the public relations officer, whom I had met in the Admiralty Islands, said he had a technical sergeant from Hollywood I might like to meet.

Naturally I did want to meet him, being primarily a collector of people from the Southland. Sgt. Ernie Hirai, 1043 N. Cole Ave., was lying on a cot in the tent, waiting, because the public relations officer knew all along that I was a collector.

ERNIE IS JAPANESE, a Nisei born in Los Angeles, who attended Hollywood High School and took a degree in mechanical engineering at the University of California.

He is attached to G.H.Q. as an interpreter and translator, and was working on temporary duty with the 1st Cavalry. He is tall and has a friendly grin which is unconsciously augmented by a typical Oriental eye-blinking.

One of the first 26 Nisei to be sent to this theater as interpreters, Ernie has been overseas 26 months. He was drafted into the Army in June of 1941, some months before his parents—Japan-born—were sent to an internment camp in Wyoming.

I ASKED HIM the obvious question—how it feels to be on the side that is killing Japanese. And I got the obvious answer.

"I consider myself American in every way," Ernie said. "Why not? All of my education has been that way. I don't know anything else. That's just the way it happened to be."

It seemed a bit odd, sitting there in the tent talking to a Japanese in the uniform of the American Army while not far away Americans in the same uniform were killing Japanese But it didn't seem odd the way Ernie put it. He has been through the New Guinea, Admiralty Islands and Leyte campaigns.

IT SEEMED A little odd to hear Ernie talk about the "Japs" he interrogates, too.

"Some of them are quite surprised when they first see me," he said. "They ask me right away if I am Japanese. I tell them right away that I am American. I explain to them that America is a land of many races and nationalities.

"Sometimes they make a little trouble. But mostly they are all right when they discover they aren't going to be killed or tortured. I talk to them a bit about home and what they were doing, give them a cigarette and put them at ease."

IT IS ERNIE'S opinion that the average Jap soldier is just as sick and tired of war as the average American G.I. He doubts very much if the Japanese as a nation will commit suicide, an opinion frequently expressed by experts.

Later I asked some of the enlisted men what they think of Ernie. They all think he is a great guy.

Los Angles Times March, 1945

Seven Nisei Brothers Serving Uncle Sam

Times photo

SCAN HEADLINES—Yoshio Nakada and his brother, Pvt. James Nakada, happily scan headlines telling of American victories over Japs in Philippines.

Luzon Victories Gladden Nisei

Uncle Sam's victories in the Philippines are the best kind of news to an 18-year-old private in the Army specialized training program despite his racial background, he asserted yesterday as he and his brother scanned the Times headlines chronicling Gen. MacArthur's progress.

He is Pvt. James Nakada, Azusa, who enlisted seven months ago as a 17-year-old internee at Hart Mountain (Wyo.) Relocation Center.

Seventh to Join

One of seven sons of Ginzo Nakada, Azusa truck farmer who returned to his home there Jan. 15, Pvt. Nakada shortly will welcome a seventh brother, Yoshio, 28, into the Army, he said last night.

The five other brothers are Sgt. Yoshinao Nakada, 26, in Army intelligence in this country; Pvt. Saburo J. Nakada, 25, in Australia; Pvt. Henry Nakada, 22, in France, all of whom were in uniform by January, 1942; Tech. 5th Grade Minoru Nakada, 24, in Alabama, and Pfc. George Nakada, 20, in France.

Return Permitted

The Nakadas—less the three then in uniform—were removed to Pomona in May, 1942, and later to Wyoming. They were given permission to return to Asuza last month.

"The removal from our home?" echoed Pvt. James. "Well, it was rather sudden, but we all realized it was necessary, or considered necessary, and as loyal Americans we were glad to co-operate.

"I have been happy in the Army, and I think it gives me just as big a thrill as any other soldier to live and train, and fight if need be, under Old Glory. The Stars and Stripes constitute my flag the same as any other American, after all, you know."

The elder Nakada plans to resume his truck farming at Azusa.

Los Angeles Times February 10, 1945

Jap-American Volunteer From Tule WRA Center Fights Nips in India

A Japanese American volunteer from a WRA center is today fighting in the India-Burma theater as a member of the U. S. Army's First Air Commando group, according to an army-censored "dispatch" to the Pacific Citizen from "somewhere in India."

The soldier is Staff Sgt. Tom Taketa, who volunteered for the Army in 1942 from Tule Lake relocation center.

Following is the army-censored "dispatch" from Staff Sgt. Tom Taketa of the First Air Commando group:

"The First Air Commando group—that name would strike a familiar chord in your minds. Surely you have read about the great doings of this outfit. I don't know what the newspapers have said about the First Air Commando group and its undertakings, but whatever was written must have made good reading material. I may be prejudiced because I happen to be one of its members, the only Nisei with this group, but I assure you that whatever I say about this outfit is with the deepest sincerity, and is shared by each and everyone of us.

"A year and a half ago, I was one of the evacuees in Tule and little did I realize at the time of my enlistment that I would be fortunate enough to join such an outfit as the one I'm in now.

"Our 'old man' the C. O., incidently, he isn't very old, and in his thirties—is a hard-fighting leader. He's a go-getter, and that's one of the main reasons that we've accomplished so much in such a short time. Our men are taking the war to the enemy, and I am more than certain that the enemy is feeling the might of our punches. I know it may sound incredible when I say that we're fighting a war of our own, but that's exactly what were doing; that is, with as much free-wheeling as we're allowed."

Klamath Falls HERALD and News

Seattle Nisei Saves Platoon Of Marauders

Sergt. Henry Gosho of Seattle, Nisei soldier with Merrill's Marauders in Burma, is one of 14 Japanese-Americans serving in the outfit, the War Relocation Authority announced yesterday.

The W. R. A. quoted a letter from a white sergeant in the Marauders, who apparently was writing about Gosho.

"The men of our platoons owe their lives," the letter said, "to Sergt. Henry G., a Japanese-American of Seattle. Hank (we call him Horizontal Hank because he's been pinned down so many times by Jap machine-gun fire) guided the machine-gun fire on our side which killed every Jap on that side.

"The boys who fought alongside Hank agree that they never have seen a more calm, cool and collected man under fire. He was always so eager to be where he could be of the most use and effectiveness and that was most always the hot spot."

Seattle Wash. TIMES
March, 1945

Reveal Husband of Cleveland Japanese Saved U. S. General

A 26-year-old Japanese-American sergeant, whose wife and brother are living in Cleveland, today was credited with helping to save the life of an American general in hand-to-hand combat with Japanese forces in the South Pacific.

Sgt. Tomas Sakamoto, whose wife is a civil service employee of the War Department, has been mentioned in dispatches from the South Pacific as the first of his race to be cited for action against the Japanese. Mrs. Sakamoto, 23, lives at 11102 Lorain avenue, while Sgt. Sakamoto's brother, Frank, 22, lives at 1906 E. 93d street.

Sakamoto was the only non-commissioned officer in an assault party led by Brig. Gen. William Chase. The party was attacked by a Jap group, headed by the Japanese island commander.

In the ensuing fighting the entire Jap group except two were killed.

Sgt. Sakamoto is a native of San Jose, Cal. He has been in the Army three years and met his wife in Minneapolis, Minn., while he was at Camp Savage.

Cleveland PRESS

LT. GARY KADANI VISITS WRA CAMP

RIVERS, Jan. 7.—(AP)—Lt. Gary Kadani, on furlough from New Guinea, visited relatives at the War Relocation Administration camp here this week accompanied byhis wife, whose residence is in Columbus, Ohio.

Lt. Kadani, who received his commission for valor and by presidential citation, said there were very few Japanese-Americans in the South Pacific theater when he was first sent there in 1942 but now there are many. He said they were giving a good account of themselves.

Before the war Lieutenant Kadani and his wife lived in Fresno and San Francisco.

Arizona STAR

C-2240-p1t-bu

WRA

Wounded in battle with the Japanese enemy in the South Pacific, Sgt. Kazuo Komoto was returned to the United States for hospitalization. On a visit to his family at the Gila River Relocation Center, he displays his Purple Heart to an admiring younger brother.

JAPANESE TELLS OF PACIFIC WAR AT RIVERS CAMP

One Jap sniper who tried his best to kill a Japanese American "doughboy" never lived to tell of his failure.

The Japanese American soldier, Staff Sgt. Kazuo Komoto, is back in America after a slug from the sniper's machine gun had shattered his knee. He visited his parents at the Rivers Relocation Center last week.

The sergeant in recounting his experience in the "toughest fighting in the world" said that he had been without sleep for a week, and had climbed out of his fox hole behind the front lines to rest. Some twenty minutes later the sniper, who had infiltrated and camouflaged himself in a tree, opened on him and several other American soldiers near him. A few seconds later the sniper was riddled by American fire.

Later, on a hospital ship, his commanding general presented him with the Purple Heart award. With a soldier's disdain for what he terms a "cripple's medal," Komoto shrugs off congratulations. Completely recovered from his knee wound, he is ready for action again.

Baltimore Sun

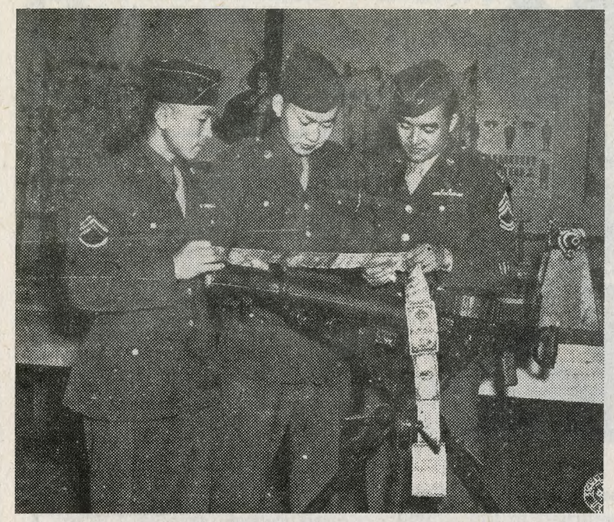
General Reveals Japanese Americans Took Part In Capture of Kwajalein Atoll

Japanese American soldiers from the United States and Hawaii participated in the invasion of the Marshall Islands and the successful capture of Kwajalein, Maj. Gen. Charles H. Corlett, whose Seventh Army Division participated in the invasion, declared in an Associated Press interview dated February 17 from the U. S. Army Headquarters in the Central Pacific.

General Corlett, whose troops are veterans of Attu, praised the work of Japanese Americans with the invading American forces.

This dispatch, published widely in U. S. newspapers, was the first official Army report of the role of Japanese Americans in the Pacific fighting, although previously published reports have indicated that Japanese Americans are fighting in the South Pacific and took part in the successful recapture of Attu and Kiska.

Nisei Sergeant Returns to U. S. After 33 Months in Pacific



FORT SNELLING, Minn.—Tech. Sgt. Takashi Kubo, right, overseas veteran of 33 months in the Pacific war zone, shows his brother, Master Sgt. Takeo Kubo, center, and Staff Sgt. Tateshi Miyazaki, both of Fort Snelling, his collection of enemy invasion money from the Pacific theatre. All are veterans of Pacific fighting, going overseas together in May, 1942. Before them is a captured Japanese 7.7 mm Lewis-type heavy machine gun, a 1932 Model still being used by the enemy.—Army Signal Corps photo by T/5 Gen Sonoda.

By PVT. PETER OHTAKI

FORT SNELLING, Minn. — Tech. Sgt. Takashi Kubo of Hollywood, Calif., returned to the United States recently after serving 33 months in the Guadalcanal, Northern Solomons and Guam campaigns.

Pacific Citizen March, 1945

Japanese American In Italy Has Fought Both Nazis And Nipponese

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29.—(UP)—Second Lieutenant Richard K. Hayashi, who should know because he has fought them both, says German and Japanese soldiers are using almost identical tactics in their desperate efforts to stave off defeat.

Hayashi, the war department reported, served in the Pacific as an enlisted man with an air force unit and now is with the 5th Army in northern Italy, leading fellow Japanese Americans in combat against the Nazis.

"Both Germans and Japs are definitely on the defensive now and use 'hit and run' tactics," he said. "They both leave a lot of snipers behind with orders to fight until death."

Furthermore, he said, both are using "teen age kids and conquered peoples" in their armies.

Hayashi is a former resident of Stockton, Calif., His wife, Mrs. Lorraine Hayashi, was relocated after Pearl Harbor along with other persons of Japanese ancestry from the Pacific Coast but has since been resettled in Minenapolis, Minn.

Sacramento BEE August, 1944

MARINE LAUDS U.S. 'GOOD' JAPS

BY MAURICE FISCHER.

Yes—there are some Japanese who have not only the respect and admiration of U.S. Marines, but are even their buddies. For that you have the word of Lt. Robert J. Newell, 7448 N. Claremont av., who has just returned from 14 months of service in the South Pacific with a unit of Marine Corps. combat military police.

But these Japanese are Americans—American-born Nisei and soldiers in the U.S. Army, who have been serving with Marine detachments in the Pacific islands as interpreters and otherwise providing the leatherneck fighters with the benefit of their knowledge of enemy ways.

Good Yank Soldiers.

"They have the respect of the Marines because they are good American soldiers and we realized the risks they are exposed to, in event they are captured by the enemy," said Lt. Newell, who left the study of law at Marquette University in 1941 to enlist in the Marine Corps.

"As it was, these boys had a tough time of it," recalls Newell with a laugh. "Each one of them has been captured eight or nine times -by our own men. One day two of them were seized while standing in a Marine chow line, in their dungarees.

Needed a Bodyguard.

"It got to the point where finally, for their own protection, we had to detail a marine to accompany them wherever they went. The men took it in good spirit."

Chicago DAILY-NEWS April, 1944

Coast VFW Post Admits Jap-American Soldier

By the Associated Press.

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 25.—Sergt. Karl Yoneda, a Japanese-American now serving with the Army in the Burma theater, has been elected to membership by the Howard A. Sperry Post, No. 3570, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

VFW officials here said that to their knowledge it was the first time since the outbreak of the present war that any person of Japanese extraction had been voted to membership in a VFW post.

Washington D.C. STAR

Kaltenborn Hails Nisei Role In War Against Japanese

Noted Commentator Sends Check to Help Provide Scholarship

MADISON, Wis.—Benjamin H. Bull, Madison attorney who has been active in assisting the resettlement of Japanese American evacuees, has received a letter from H. V. Kaltenborn, nationally known NBC radio commentator, enclosing Mr. Kaltenborn's check for $100 to help provide a scholarship for a young student of Japanese ancestry at Wayland academy, Beaver Dam, Wis., the Capital Times reported on June 27.

In a letter accompanying the check, Mr. Kaltenborn declared:

"As one who has personal contact with the magnificent contribution being made by young Americans of Japanese ancestry to our war effort in the South and Southwest Pacific, I am happy to have an opportunity to make this contribution. I feel that I personally owe something to my fellow Americans of Japanese ancestry to make up for the sometimes unfair and sometimes unintelligent treatment they have received.

"You are at liberty to publicize both this contribution and this statement if you feel it will serve the cause of fair play to our fellow Americans of Japanese ancestry which we both have at heart."

The Capital Times added that Attorney Bull "has been active for many months in behalf of American citizens of Japanese descent in helping them to find employment and a chance to assist in our war effort."

The PACIFIC CITIZEN July, 1944

Nisei Officer Lauds U. S. Army Spirit

Thirty-one months on Pacific battle fronts, from Kokoda trail to the Philippines, are a nightmarish dream to First Lt. Phil Ishio, former University of Utah student, but his first Red Cross Christmas box at Buna remains a glowing memory.

Lt. Ishio, son of Mr. and Mrs. Masaichi Ishio, 25 S. 1st West, returned to Salt Lake City this week on a month's leave after four years' service with the U. S. army intelligence division.

Gratitude for that Red Cross Christmas package and high praise for the fair treatment of nisei soldiers by the U. S. army highlighted Lt. Ishio's reminiscences.

"Pearl Harbor did not make any difference in the army's treatment of nisei soldiers," he said. "All of us are given equal chances for promotion in the true American way, and there are many commissioned officers, in both the European and Pacific theaters."

Wears Battle Stars

Remaining in the background of his conversation is the story told by his service ribbons: A bronze star medal for meritorious service, three stars for the Papuan, New Guinea and Dutch New Guinea campaigns, a star for being under attack by the enemy and two presidential unit citations.

A graduate of West high school, Lt. Ishio attended the University of Japan and the University of Utah, majoring in languages in both universities. He was inducted into the army at Fort Douglas in October, 1941, and was sent to Camp Roberts, Cal., for field artillery basic training. Further training was received in California and Kansas camps.

Graduates in 1942

Advanced to private first class, he was sent to the military intelligence service and language school at Camp Savage, Minn., being graduated with that school's first class in September, 1942.

About the time allied forces were meeting reverses across Kokoda trail in New Guinea, Lt. Ishio was sent to Australia. When the allies began driving the enemy back, he was sent to the front, then on to the Buna campaign, where the Salt Laker had his "closest shave." A bomb dropped so close to his foxhole that the hole caved in on him. "Buna was tough," he admitted.

Campaign in Philippines

Later attached to Sixth army headquarters, Lt. Ishio participated in all the major campaigns from Finschhafen to the Philippines. His ship was bombed, but not sunk, at Leyte.

Salt Lake TRIBUNE April, 1945

PRESS POSTSCRIPTS

"THESE JAPANESE ARE AMERICANS-AMERICAN-BORN NISEI AND SOLDIERS IN THE U. S. ARMY, WHO HAVE BEEN SERVING WITH MARINE DETACHMENTS IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.....

"THEY HAVE THE RESPECT OF THE MARINES BECAUSE THEY ARE GOOD AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND WE REALIZE THE RISKS THEY ARE EXPOSED TO, IN EVENT THAT THEY ARE CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY." --CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH MARINE LIEUTENANT ROBERT J. NEWELL. April 19, 1944.

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T/3 Ken Omura, Seattle-born Japanese, was drowned in New Guinea, March 19, while on active duty with the Army.--From the Seattle Post Intelligencer. April 5, 1944.

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"THE SOLDIER'S MEDAL IS AWARDED TO MASTER SGT. SUSUMU TOYODA FOR HEROISM AND BRAVERY NEAR TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE, BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS ON JUNE 29, 1944." EXTRACT FROM WAR DEPARTMENT CITATION.

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Kakuichi Sadamune, 56, started the New Year reunited with his family at 220 6th Street, Oakland, after nearly three years at a Japanese relocation center in Poston, Arizona.

His eldest son, Alfred, a Technical High School graduate in 1933 was seriously wounded in France.....Another son, Raymond, 26, has been a private in the Army since March 1941 and has spent most of the past two years in foxholes fighting to recover Pacific bases from the Japanese. He is now believed to be on Leyte Island. -- From the TRIBUNE, Oakland, California. January 2, 1945.

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IT IS A MATTER OF RECORD THAT BEFORE THE NISEI TROOPS WERE ASKED TO START GOING TO WORK ON THE GERMANS, THEY CAPTURED THE FIRST JAPANESE PRISONER OF THIS WAR. ON DECEMBER 7, 1941, TWO JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL GUARDISTS SWAM INTO THE PACIFIC AND TOOK A JAP OUT OF A ONE-MAN SUBMARINE STUCK ON A REEF OFF THE ISLAND OF OAHU. --FROM JOHN LARDNER'S REPORTER AT LARGE IN THE NEW YORKER. March 31, 1945.

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"I've seen many Nisei soldiers in action. They do a good job and are very popular."--From an interview with Richard W. Johnson, UP correspondent in the Pacific.--In the OREGON JOURNAL. February 6, 1945.

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A DELAYED APRIL 3 DISPATCH FROM THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE RELATES HOW A NISEI INTERPRETER AIDED STAFF SGT. JAMES K. DUBOIS IN PERSUADING 250 CIVILIANS TO COME OUT OF A CAVE ON OKINAWA ISLAND WHERE THEY WERE HIDDEN.

DUBOIS, AN ARMY PICTORIAL SERVICE CINEMATOGRAPHER, WAS ABLE TO RECORD FILMS OF THE EPISODE AFTER THE NISEI HAD CONVINCED THE NATIVES THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE HARMED.--THE PACIFIC CITIZEN. April, 1945.